



Transportation District 3
March 2001

Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin Michigan Street Bridge Study newsletter

A number of studies associated with the bridge are currently being completed

Important dates

- Traffic counts taken April-October 2000
- Traffic study completion March 2001
- Alignment/geometries study completion May 2001
- Begin draft Environmental Document February 2001
- Public hearing August 2001
- Preferred alternative chosen October 2001

Other studies

Studies nearing completion to be referenced in the project Environmental Document include:

- Underwater and Terrestrial Archaeological Studies
- Historic Properties Study
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
- Geotechnical Sediment Sampling and Analysis

Traffic Study description

The Traffic Study involves the study of traffic operations for various scenarios, or combinations of approach roadways and crossing(s). The scenarios include approach roadway improvements on both the west and east sides of downtown Sturgeon Bay and crossings in the Madison/Michigan and Maple/Oregon corridors. The information from this study will be used in the future Alignment (Geometrics) Study.

Alignment (Geometrics) Study description

The Alignment (Geometrics) Study will determine the impacts associated with the Traffic Study scenarios by developing preliminary geometric plans for the scenarios. Impacts to be studied include property acquisition, impacts to property access, loss of on-street parking, building impacts, to name a few.

The information from this study, in combination with information from the Traffic Study will allow the City of Sturgeon Bay and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to evaluate the relationship between traffic operations and possible impacts.

Existing Bridge Condition Study

WisDOT hired an independent consultant, BRW, to perform in-depth inspection and engineering evaluations of the existing Michigan Street Bridge. A report is expected to be completed in March 2001 that will present the current condition of the bridge, recommended maintenance action for immediate, 10 and 25 year timeframes; and estimated costs, repair time and bridge closure time for each recommended action. Although this study is not part of this project, information from this report will be referenced in the project Environmental Document and used to evaluate project alternatives that include rehabilitation of the existing bridge.



WisDOT District 3
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What is an environmental process?

People following developments surrounding the Michigan Street Bridge frequently hear references to the “environmental process” and “environmental document.” These are two very important items. As you might imagine, the “process” leads to the “document,” but to understand the process, we must first examine the document itself.

What is the environmental document?

The environmental document is the mechanism through which environmental impacts are considered. Wisconsin and federal legislation direct all federal agencies and their representatives (in this case WisDOT) to... “use a systematic approach during planning and decision making whenever proposed actions would have a potential impact on the human environment. Further, agencies must include detailed documentation” ...of impacts, unavoidable effects, alternatives and any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources. In short, it both dictates and documents all the work done leading to a recommendation.

What stage is the process in?

Right now, the environmental process is being carried out.

How does the public find out what the document contains?

When the draft document is ready, anticipated later this summer, a “Notice of Availability” is published in the local newspapers advising the public where they can review and comment on it. All comments are considered and appropriate responses are included in the final environmental document. A comment period of a month minimum is allowed.

During the draft document availability period, a public hearing is also held, documenting all public and agency comments and concerns. Following the public hearing, WisDOT will consider the information from the environmental document, public comment and local preferences and select a preferred alternative(s). Then, if the chosen alternative(s) will not cause a significant impact on the human environment, a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) is prepared and preliminary design work begun. In the event the study concludes that the project’s impacts are significant, an Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared.

Individuals wishing to be added to our mailing list should contact:

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